and transportation. In all these cases, Government have lodged protests against Pakistani actions and have urged Pakistan to fulfil its commitments under the provisions of the bilateral protocol. This demand was reiterated during discussions between the two countries on Fridendly Exchanges in Various Fields held in Delhi on 13th November 1998.

Statement of Dalai Lama Regarding Autonomy for Tibet

2097. KUMARI NIRMALA DESHPANDE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that H.H. the Dalai Lama has stated that he is seeking autonomy for Tibet, as a part of China; and

(b) if so, whether India is ready to offer its good offices to facilitate the process of dialogue between the Government of People's Republic of China and H.H. The Dalai Lama?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) According to reports available with Government, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, in a statement in Washington on November 10, 1998, stated, "I am not seeking independence for Tibet, nor do my actions seek its separation from the People's Republic of China. I am for autonomy, genuine autonomy for the Tibetan people to preserve their distinct identity and way of life."

(b) According to reports, there are some prospects of negotiations between Government of China and His Holiness the Dalai Lama. We would welcome such a process.

News-Item Regarding Pok Group Seeking Support

2098. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item appearing in the Pioneer dated 18th November, 1998, under the heading 'POK group seeks Indian support';

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) Government's reaction in regard thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) to (c) Government are aware of the plight of the people in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir and of the existence of popular sentiment among them against Pakistan's continued illegal and forcible occupation of this territory, which is a part of the Indian State of Jammu and Kashmir. During discussions of 17th October 1998, on Jammu and Kashmir, which were held as part of the composite dialogue process, Government called upon Pakistan to ensure that the people of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir are allowed in full measure their basic and fundamental rights.

Meeting of India-EU

2099. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a ministerial meeting of the India-European Union Troika was held recently to discuss the relationship between the two sides; and

(b) if so, the issues specifically discussed and conclusions arrived at?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir. The 11th India-EU Troika Ministerial Meeting was held in New Delhi on November 13, 1998.

(b) The two sides reviewed the progress of bilateral relations. A wide range of issues, including those relating to the environment, the global financial crisis, international cooperation to combat terrorism organised crime and drug trafficking and developments in Asia and Europe were also discussed.

The two sides identified a number of fora and initiatives to take their dialogue forward. These include: continued Senior Official Meetings, the reinforcement of their dialogue on environment issues, and interchanges between European and Indian think tanks. Both sides expressed the need for an intensified high level economic dialogue to discuss economic, trade and financial matters. It was agreed that consultations on various bilateral and multilateral issues would be continued.